

STREAM



Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management

STREAM Journal

Learning and communicating about the livelihoods of fishers and farmers

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Note

In June 2006, STREAM held its fifth regional conference in Bangkok, Thailand. An important part of these annual gatherings – and a component of the way that STREAM monitors and evaluates its work – is the sharing of and learning from Significant Change Stories collected by our Communications Hub Managers, some of which are also written by them. This special number of the *STREAM Journal* features stories from or about Cambodia, India, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The changes highlighted in the stories concern:

- differences in livelihood experiences and potentials as a result of legal reform in Cambodia
- a fish farmer's venture into nursery rearing and networking in India
- a man and a woman whose lives are transformed by starting small with pond fish farming in Nepal
- perceptions of senior government colleagues that change as a result of engaging in participatory consultative processes with communities in Pakistan
- a different way of writing and reporting about a government agency's activities after some positive learning experiences in the Philippines, and
- the pride of a government officer upon learning about the success of a fisher in Vietnam.

Happy reading!

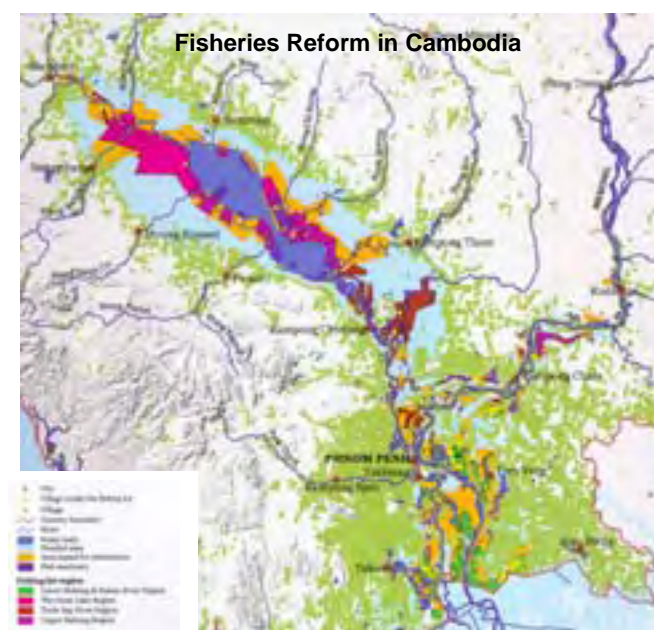
Graham Haylor, STREAM Director
William Savage, *STREAM Journal* Editor

Impacts of the Fisheries Policy Reform on Livelihoods in Cambodia

Chun Sophat and Mitchell Isaacs

On 24 October 2000, the government of the Kingdom of Cambodia introduced a series of policy reforms regarding the use of, and access to, fishing lots in the country. The policy reforms were initiated by Prime Ministerial Decree and aimed to address growing conflicts between private fishing lot operators and rural people around access to fishing areas. They also aimed to contribute to national efforts to alleviate rural poverty by giving rural poor people better access to fisheries resources through community fisheries management.

The reforms consisted of several elements. More than 56% of the area of leased fishing lots, amounting to 538,522 hectares, was released to be used and managed by local communities. To support this, in June 2005 a Sub-decree on Community Fisheries clearly spelled out the roles and responsibilities of different actors in the overall process of managing community fisheries. In addition, the local government institutions that form the immediate context for community fisheries have acquired strength and competence over the past years. Most importantly, on 21 May 2006 the New Fisheries Law was promulgated, providing a comprehensive legal framework for the establishment and management of community fisheries (CF). This is one step forward in fisheries policy reform with the CFs. Since then the Department of Fisheries has changed its designation to the Fisheries Administration, and in the near future, a vertical organizational structure will be put in place to comply with the decentralized policy, through which the Fisheries Administration will become an effective fisheries service provider to its stakeholders and communities.



Public consultations for Sub-decree on Community Fisheries



The current assessments of the impacts of the fisheries policy reforms were carried out in a different context compared to the first assessments conducted in 2003-04. First of all, the process of implementation of the reforms has moved ahead significantly. As a result, today more than 500 CFs have been established. While some of them were already functioning with support from the Fisheries Administration, NGOs and donors, many more existed only in name or were struggling to establish themselves. The fisheries policy reforms had also been introduced into an administrative and political environment that was extremely dynamic.

Eventually the policy reforms provided greatly increased access to fisheries resources for a large number of poor people and this brought, at least in the short term, significant benefits for them.

People's overall assessment of the impacts of the policy reforms on their livelihoods is now relatively evenly balanced. Most respondents consulted during the impact assessments felt that there has been little substantial change in incomes or overall well-being or a slight improvement.

What difference has this change made or will it make?

Since the fisheries reform was undertaken in 2000, local people have more direct accessibility to the natural resource. In the meanwhile, a series of legal frameworks has been formulated to support the policy reform, and also to fully provide an entitlement to communities to decide in their own way in terms of natural resource management and livelihood enhancement. They can initiate and innovate whatever they consider to be of benefit, improve their own careers and generate more income for their community.

The Fisheries Administration and concerned agencies play important roles in coordinating and directing communities in how they are implementing, and in providing the technical, institutional and legal framework in support of the community. It is also necessary to properly monitor and evaluate the process of implementation. Importantly, an effective model, with a systematic structure and relevant tools for community fishery management, should be formulated and introduced to the community. The model should be feasible and applicable based on the real situation of the community.

Why is this difference important?

It is significant to the people who are dependent on the natural resource. It can open up more opportunities for local people who previously had few or no rights to directly access the fishing ground. Since then they have been able to utilize and manage the natural resource in their communities by themselves. On the other hand, a lot of legal frameworks have been formulated to use as road maps and effective tools for helping communities become more aware of their roles and responsibilities in aquatic resource management, development, utilization and conservation. Right now, they can be the owner of their natural resource, and they are entitled fully to use and manage it. This will provide more opportunities for them to improve their livelihoods. It will also help them to be aware of the value of the natural resource in their daily lives and in future generations. It will enable them to promote their knowledge, experience and participatory concepts.

Lessons for STREAM

The main role played by STREAM in the fisheries policy reform in Cambodia was acting as the key communications agency that collated significant messages and information regarding the communities' livelihood enhancement and natural resource management. It also initiated ideas and strategies on how to promote the institutional, legal, livelihood and communication aspects in the process. Through that, a lot of useful information has been shared and contributed to the policy reform to develop to the stage of community fisheries' implementation. The STREAM Initiative has highlighted a lot of external experiences in terms of entitlement, capacity building and lessons learned to many stakeholders, especially for the community fisheries to be well aware of the appropriate approach they should take to attain their goal.

The STREAM Initiative should be more actively involved in its support to the fisheries policy reform, in particular the new fisheries organizational structure which will open up opportunities for communities to directly contact the fisheries agencies. This will make it easier to exchange information and experiences among communities, fisheries agencies and relevant stakeholders.

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A Success Story about Aquaculture in India

Shri Prameswar Bhoi

I am a farmer of Mandosil Village. I was struggling for my livelihood by means of agriculture, cultivating paddy and vegetables on 2.5 acres of land. Since most of my land is upland, my yearly production was not exceeding Rs 4,000. Therefore I was compelled to go outside for extra earnings to meet the family expenses.

After the intervention of WORLP (Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project), implemented by Sahabhagi Vikash Abhiyan (SVA), I came to know that they are ready to help farmers to utilize local resources by adopting the latest technology provided to small, marginal and landless farmers. I enrolled myself as a member of the watershed association. I got the opportunity to get training on nursery pond management from SVA.



Shri Prameswar Bhoi working in his pond

After taking the training I got the confidence that I can manage nursery ponds on my own land. Then I made nursery ponds on an area of 12 decimals with the help of the watershed association and technical support from the One-stop Aqua Shop (OAS) in Bilenjore in June 2005.



Shri Prameswar Bhoi describing his success

I started nursery rearing in the ponds with support from the OAS like a fry drag net, plankton net and hapa. After doing a cost-benefit analysis, I found that I made a profit of Rs 10,000 from the nursery ponds.

After seeing the results, other members of the association were also motivated and showed their interest in nursery networking. Now I am living happily without going outside to search for work. My plan is to increase the nursery network business so that I can earn more money.

Mr Rafiq Mohammad of SVA in Bilenjore helped me select this story. According to him, "We observed that Mr Bhoi is a small farmer having little income prior to this year. Besides he was interested to take up the project on his land on a trial basis after getting the necessary training from the OAS. He did the nursery rearing successfully and set an example for others."

STREAM, WORLP and SVA

In Orissa, STREAM was commissioned by the DFID-funded Western Orissa Rural Livelihoods Project (WORLP) to explore and report opportunities to enhance the capacity of WORLP target groups and staff to carry out sustainable aquaculture practices in their project areas.

One of the WORLP Project Implementing Agencies, the NGO Sahabhagi Vikash Abhiyan (SVA), with the support of WORLP and the nr International team, and technical and institutional backstopping from the Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) and the STREAM Initiative, has built and pilot tested a hatchery module in SVA Bilenjore. Many farmers visit the SVA Bilenjore campus in Nuapara District for capacity building, attending training and other inputs.

The nursing network concept has been piloted by SVA, with the support of WORLP and institutional backstopping from the STREAM Initiative. In the first year of the nursing network established by SVA, 54 groups attended the network planning meeting facilitated by STREAM and 38 prepared and stocked their nurseries with seed from the hatchery. The SVA hatchery supplied 5,600,000 seeds to



Carp hatchery, SVA Bilenjore

these nursery pond owners in its first period of operation. Farmers' profits ranged between Rs 6,000 and Rs 13,000 in just three weeks. Shri Prameswar Bhoi was one of the participants of that planning meeting and he also made a profit from this nursing network activity.

Shri Prameswar Bhoi is a farmer in Mandosil Village, Bilenjore District, Orissa State, India. He can be reached through the STREAM India Communications Hub Manager at <rubumukherjee@rediffmail.com>.

Two Stories from Nepal

Fisherman Becomes a Rich Fish Farmer

Rjendra Yadav

Bouwalal Mukheya lives in Nanupatty Village of Dhanusha District. He is a 56-year-old fish farmer. He is the son of the late Dhukharan Mukhiya and Paro devi Mukhiya. His father was a fisherman. His father died when he was in childhood. At that time he had just a small hut. After his father's death, Bouwalal continued his father's occupation, fishing in rivulets, the community pond and swampy land. His young age was passed with hard days of fishing. He never went to school.

When he was young, one day he went to the Fishery Development Office with a desire to know what assistance is provided to fishers. There he got an idea of the possibility of taking others' ponds on lease to start fish farming. After returning home, he decided to start fish farming instead of just depending on fishing for his and his family's livelihood. He took a village pond on lease and started to culture fish. In the first year he was able to earn Rs 1,000 (\$100), which encouraged him to continue. In the next year, he took four ponds on lease and continued fish farming.

After the experience of six years of fish farming, Bouwalal took a neighbor's private fish hatchery on lease to produce fish fingerlings. The fish nursery brought an unexpected change in his life, as he has been scaling up his income year by year. The income he earned by selling fingerlings enabled him to purchase seven hectares of land and to save one million rupees in a bank account.

In 1981, he worked as a Fishery Development Assistant and was involved in extension of the fisheries knowledge he gained by fish farming in the leased ponds.

After 20 years of hard work and deep devotion to farming fish and running the fish nursery, he became the top farmer of the country among fingerling suppliers. In 1999 he received the Gorkha Dhachin Bahu Award, the highest honor given to farmers.

In these years he is able to produce and sell more than 80 million fingerlings to fish farmers. He is not only producing fingerlings but also developing a species of fish, Bhanginwata, by crossing two different species. This new species has a fast growth rate and good taste, which makes it popular.

Bouwalal is the richest farmer in his village. He has a two-story building, mini-truck, water-lifting pump, color television and biogas plant. His sons are studying in India and one daughter has completed graduation. In his fish farm there are ten permanent and twenty temporary staff. He is providing a mini-truck for transportation of fingerlings to those who purchase large numbers of fish fingerlings from his hatchery and nursery.

The most significant change is that a poor fisherman became a rich farmer by adopting aquaculture. The government ensures the access of fishers to aquatic resources and supports them technically. Bouwalal Mukheya's story tells us that we can easily reduce poverty in fisher communities by encouraging and supporting them in accessing resources and technology.

Rjendra Yadav is working as an Agriculture Extension Officer in the Fishery Development and Training Center, Janakpur, Nepal. He can be reached at <ftcjk@incswb.net>.

Women's Empowerment through Aquaculture

Rabindra Man Malla

Gita Ghimire was born in Kalaya Municipality of Bara. She is 39 years old. Her daily routine is to go to her fish farm, three kilometers from her home, early in the morning and work there the whole day before returning home at 6-7 pm. She started a fish nursery in 1992, one year after the death of her husband. At the beginning she had no idea about fish farming or running a fish nursery. Her husband's colleague suggested her to become involved in agriculture as the husband was an agriculturist.

To start the fish nursery, her brother supported her by providing a pond. With patience and hard work in the first year she was able to sell 0.5 million fingerlings. Her continuous efforts made her a successful fish farmer.

In these years she is able to sell 5-7 million fish fingerlings annually. She owns eleven nursery ponds. Fingerlings produced on her farm are sold in neighboring districts and in Bihar State of India.

Now she has land in the capital city of Kathmandu. She has no financial problems and she supports her brothers and brother-in-law.

The significant change is that the life of a widow became more comfortable from fish fingerling production. If fisheries organizations encouraged women to become involved in the industry, that would bring significant changes to their lives. This is a lesson we can learn from the story of Gita.

Rabindra Man Malla is a Fishery Development Officer. He can be reached at the District Agriculture Development Office in Bara, Nepal, through the STREAM Nepal Communications Hub Manager at <agroinfo@wlink.com.np>.

A Positive Change in Perceptions in Pakistan

Cecile Brugere

The nature of the significant change I perceived is a positive change in the perceptions of government fisheries officials of the value of participation and bottom-up, consultative work processes. Those who were involved (i.e., the colleagues I am suggesting changed their minds) were officials with whom I was working under a FAO Technical Cooperation Project related to the formulation of a policy and strategy for fisheries and aquaculture development in Pakistan.

The collaboration between FAO and STREAM in this project allowed government officials to be involved in a participatory process of gathering views and information from poor fishing communities about their needs regarding fisheries and aquaculture development. Although this may not have been seen as necessary by certain government officials, the relentless efforts of STREAM in the country to ensure that they would be involved allowed for these government officials to progressively change their mind about the necessity of such a process, and broaden their understanding about the dynamics of poverty in specific areas of their country.

This change, however, did not take place overnight, but throughout the duration of the project. It became evident during the final workshop, where government officials, in particular those who had been closely involved, were able to defend the participatory process that had been undertaken during the project and in which they had participated themselves. They were also able to demonstrate with confidence to other



A consultation with fish farmers in Gujranwala District, Punjab Province

government officials that the outputs of this project really reflected the needs and desires expressed at several levels (communities, districts and provinces) and as such were more valuable and balanced than what they would have come up with initially and without consultation.

This is an important outcome because if these government officials have truly understood the value of participation, this is likely to have positive impacts in their future work. It may enable them to be more willing to use participatory principles and processes when engaging with other people and communities who are affected by their work.

It is an important change because these colleagues are highly-placed people in the Government of Pakistan, with the power to influence the way work and projects are formulated and carried out, and therefore could have far-reaching impacts. This change also demonstrates that someone needs to be there, i.e., on site, with skills and knowledge of cultural practices, to make things happen. The relentless efforts, patience and tact of the STREAM Communications Hub Manager in this respect made the change possible.

Ensuring the long-term benefits of a 'changed' perception at all levels of an administration is however likely to remain a challenging task. This may be because some fellow officials are more "set in their ways" than others, and their resistance, if strong, may overwhelm and jeopardize the views of those who are willing to implement more progressive methods in their



A consultation with women in Chilya Village, Thatta District, Sindh Province

work. But the views of resistant people should not be discarded or ignored in the process. They can be valid in the face of constraints of efficiency, effectiveness and accountability. I believe that it is through perseverance and negotiation that best compromises emerge out of the confrontation of traditional and 'changed' views. A compromise thus reached is a sure step towards a progressive and long-term change in views.

The lesson to be learned here is: keep engaging with people, even reluctant ones. Have someone there, with the right people skills, perseverance, knowledge and networks, as change will not be easy to trigger (or pursue) from afar.

Cecile Brugere is a Fishery Planning Analyst with FAO in Rome. She can be reached at <Cecile.Brugere@fao.org>.

Small Details That Matter – A Story from the Philippines

Rommel Guarin

The work in the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division (PMED) of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources 6 (BFAR 6) is concerned mostly with report consolidation and the monitoring and evaluation of the agency's various programs, projects and activities. This usually entails the PMED staff venturing into the field to find out how the implementers and beneficiaries are doing. The information gathered from this is then passed on to the management in the form of reports. While every effort is made to make sure that the information contained in the reports I submit is substantial, there are certain instances when it is anything but. Little details are usually sacrificed in the name of cohesiveness and conciseness.

There were two instances that encouraged me to change this approach to report-writing. One was during a planning workshop conducted in February 2006, where the chief of PMED, Mr Roberto Espinosa, emphasized the importance of substantial reporting to address various issues and concerns in program implementation.

Another was during my attendance on the Writeshop for Web Content and Newsletters in November 2005. The topics ranged from news-, feature- and significant-change-story-writing and were presented by the STREAM Communications Hub Manager, Ms Elizabeth Gonzales.

Somehow, the Writeshop influenced the way I formulate reports. Some of the topics discussed, particularly in the news- and feature-writing parts, were the importance of details and substantial information, while the significant-change-story-writing in some way allowed me to write reports in a more relaxed yet substantive manner.

In addition to the usual who's, what's, when's, where's, why's and how's, I now try to include recommendations and other

comments, either from beneficiaries, implementers or other relevant persons. For example, during the conduct of the Modified Extensive Milkfish Culture conducted throughout Western Visayas, comments – both positive and negative – from local government personnel as well as beneficiaries were incorporated in the report. In this way, the BFAR 6 management were made aware of these issues and were able to formulate and/or modify policies to improve the implementation of this particular project.



The author, left, conferring with Ms Elizabeth Gonzales, STREAM Philippines Communications Hub Manager, in the first regional writeshop

Another instance where the inclusion of seemingly minute details figures in my line of work is in the editing of *Haw-as*, the official publication of BFAR 6. While space and other formatting constraints will sometimes result in the deletion of some details, we tried to condense useful information into “60-second boxes.” These boxes, which contain interesting information, could be in the form of a remark from a speaker, backgrounder on an event, useful tips and information shared by a presenter, or FAQs (frequently asked questions). We felt that readers who have not, for example, attended the Regional Writeshop 2 could benefit from information such as tips on making effective presentations or taking visually-pleasing pictures, which would otherwise be omitted from the body of the news article.

I chose to highlight this particular personal change because the simple approach has the potential of generating positive results in terms of policy changes for improvement in the delivery of services and projects. While it is true that not every report could be promptly acted upon, it is interesting to note that if everyone in the bureau takes their time to produce more substantive reports, a lot of potential problems could be more easily dealt with. The inclusion of seemingly small details, particularly those from beneficiaries and stakeholders of BFAR’s programs, projects and activities, would give the agency a clue as to what its clientele really need.



Mr Roberto Espinosa emphasizes a point during the regional planning

While the STREAM Philippines Country Office is making efforts to make itself available to BFAR’s mainstream operations, it is hoped that the initiative could participate in more workshops such as the one described above. The presentation on significant-change-story-writing could help inspire other government personnel to do better in their line of work.

Sometimes not skimping on the details could prove beneficial in relaying what lies beneath a report’s contents.

Rommel Guarin is a staff of the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Division of BFAR 6 based in Iloilo City, Philippines. He can be reached at <mcdreamier@yahoo.com>.

A Vietnamese Farmer Managing Aquaculture and Capture in a Reservoir

Nguyen Van Lung

I met Mr Duong Quang Thin of Che Village, Dan Tien Commune, Vo Nhai District, Thai Nguyen Province at a training course on aquaculture held by the Provincial Gardeners' Association. Just a few minutes before the class, I saw him hastily enter and come to a seat in the fourth row near my stand. Realizing that I was watching him, he appeared happy and embarrassingly unfolded his wet trousers. It was enough time for me to see some fish scales clinging to his sleeves before he explained, "I just carried fish to market for my wife. During all four market gatherings at the commune and Mung Village on the 4th, 9th, 13th and 18th days of the lunar month, we manage to sell up to 30-40 kg of fish."



"What is the fish price here?," I asked.

*An earthen fish pond in a mountainous district of Thai Nguyen Province
(Photo: Kim Van Tieu)*

A smile brightened his face, as he said, "In general the fish price in this district is usually higher than in Thai Nguyen City, but I have to check around with neighboring villagers to set a reasonable level. I am not a middle man anyway. Thank goodness that for the last few years the upland villages near here have started consuming fish from my small reservoir, and the supply is usually less than the demand."

It was then the beginning of the class, and as a trainer invited by the Gardeners' Association, I had to return to the lecture for the farmers. "Please come to my house for lunch," Mr Thin requested me quickly. Although rather tired, I accepted his invitation after the morning session.

Looking for a seat on the bamboo bed in the guard tent set up steadily on an islet in the middle of the reservoir, I found some persons already in. They were a cousin of Mr Thin who was employed to take care of the fish, a forestry inspector and an agriculture officer. Mr Thin began making tea and while waiting for it to be served, he poured wine into small cups and gave them to everybody.

Knowing my involvement in the fish stocking activities since the reservoir was still unused, Mr Thin introduced me to the others, by saying: "Before 2001, the reservoir was only utilized for watering dozens of hectares of paddy fields lying down there at the dam root. At that time, a few fishermen occasionally caught fish using explosives or toxic roots. As a result, they got a small fish quantity and the reserve gradually declined. More than 20 households living in the upper-

basin area had no way to survive. Since 2001, thanks to the central fisheries agencies, the SAPA strategy and the STREAM Initiative, fish seeds were stocked here and we started earning money through a community-based management mechanism. It was, however, a lot of trouble in the first year, but now things are getting better thanks to the support of villagers.”

“Was there any jealousy instead of support?” asked the forestry inspector.

Mr Thin sipped the tea cup and said, “The support I have received is the result of my patient interaction and encouragement to every household. After signing the reservoir rental contract with the local authority, I told the villagers to invest in nets and labor, and in turn they would get paid by me. The payment value is 50% of the production. I also contributed to the purchase of nets and assumed the main responsibility of caretaking and organizing. Whoever is unable to buy nets just needs to engage in guarding and cleaning the water body, and they are authorized to catch shrimp but not fish. Therefore no poaching or destruction cases have happened since then. On an annual basis, I host a meeting between the authorities and local residents, at which they can share opinions on how to manage aquatic resources and strengthen the relationship among people through common action.”



Lending a hand to net fish (Photo: Kim Van Tieu)

The time did not allow me to be there any longer. Mr Thin took me to the quay on a boat. Looking at the reservoir surface shadowed by green plant coverage and mingled with half-secluded images of fish schools in a distant view, a joyful feeling quietly came to my soul. I thought, the matter does not lie in the water body, but it is the human factor that makes positive changes to aquatic resource management and results in livelihoods improvement.

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About the STREAM Journal

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Purpose

The *STREAM Journal* is published quarterly to promote participation, communication and policies that support the livelihoods of poor aquatic resources users in Asia-Pacific, and to build links within the aquatic resources management and other sectors across the region. The *STREAM Journal* covers issues related to people whose livelihoods involve aquatic resources management, especially people with limited resources, and government, non-governmental and international practitioners who work with them in communities. Such issues include learning, conflict management, information and communications technologies, aquatic resources management, legislation, livelihoods, gender, participation, stakeholders, policy and communications.

Another equally important purpose of the *STREAM Journal* is to provide an opportunity for seldom-raised voices to be heard and represented in a professional publication that is practical yet somewhat academic. The contents of the *STREAM Journal* should not be taken as reflecting the views of any particular organization or agency, but as statements by individuals based on their own experience. While authors are responsible for the contents of their articles, STREAM recognizes and takes responsibility for any editorial bias and oversights.

Distribution

The *STREAM Journal* is available in three formats:

- An electronic PDF version which is printed and distributed by the STREAM Communications Hubs in each country
- A version which can be accessed and downloaded in PDF format from the Virtual Library on the STREAM Website at www.streaminitiative.org, and
- A printed version which is distributed by the NACA Secretariat.

Contribution

The *STREAM Journal* encourages the contribution of articles of interest to aquatic resources users and people who work with them. The *STREAM Journal* also supports community-level colleagues to document their own experiences in these pages.

Articles should be written in plain English and no more than 1,000 words long (about two A4 pages of single-spaced text).

Contributions can be made to William Savage, *STREAM Journal* Editor, at <savage@loxinfo.co.th>. For more information, contact Graham Haylor, STREAM Director, at <ghaylor@loxinfo.co.th>.

About STREAM

Support to Regional Aquatic Resources Management (STREAM) is an Initiative designed within the five-year Work Program cycle of the Network of Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific (NACA). It aims to support agencies and institutions to:

- Utilize existing and emerging information more effectively
- Better understand poor people's livelihoods, and
- Enable poor people to exert greater influence over policies and processes that impact on their lives.

STREAM will do this by supporting the development of policies and processes of mediating institutions, and building capacity to:

- Identify aquatic resources management issues impacting on the livelihoods of poor people
- Monitor and evaluate different management approaches
- Extend information, and
- Network within and between sectors and countries.

The STREAM Initiative is based around partnerships, involving at the outset a coalition of founding partners (AusAID, DFID, FAO and VSO) supporting NACA. It has adopted an inclusive approach, reaching out to link stakeholders engaged in aquatic resources management and supporting them to influence the Initiative's design, implementation and management.

The partnerships' work is coordinated in each Country Office through a National Coordinator (a senior national colleague agreed with the government) and a Communications Hub Manager (a full-time national colleague supported in the first two years by STREAM), and linking a range of national stakeholders. The Communications Hub is provided with hardware, software, training, information-technology support, and networking and human resources support, and links national stakeholders through an internet-based virtual regional network.

National coordination is guided by an annually-reviewed Country Strategy Paper (CSP) drawn up by the Coordinator and Hub Manager in consultation with stakeholders with whom they regularly network. A CSP identifies key issues, highlights regional linkages, proposes and prioritizes key actions, and seeks funding for these from STREAM and elsewhere (with STREAM support).

The STREAM Regional Office (at the NACA Secretariat in Bangkok) directs the Initiative, provides a regional coordination function, and funds and manages cross-cutting activities dealing with livelihoods, institutions, policy development and communications, the four outcomes-based STREAM themes.

STREAM implementation is an iterative process, initially operating in Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Vietnam and Yunnan, China, and expanding within Asia-Pacific where opportunities exist to tackle poverty and promote good governance, as experience is gained, lessons are learned, impact is demonstrated and additional funding is secured. STREAM's communications strategy aims to increase impact by ensuring that existing knowledge and expertise inform ongoing change processes around the region, and that the lessons learned are disseminated throughout Asia-Pacific. The *STREAM Journal* and the STREAM website are components of this strategy.

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